WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Renovation of Mahabodhi temple complex

644. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Mahabodhi temple complex, holiest shrine of Buddhism, is in a state of disrepair, amidst garbage and sewage and facilities are non existent;

(b) whether it is a fact that the toilets in the complex are in a sorry state and none is W.C. or disabled friendly; and

(c) if so, the step Government propose to take to renovate the temple complex?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY). (a) to (c) Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya is not a centrally protected monument. It is managed by the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee constituted under Bodhgaya Temple Act, 1949. In the year 2000 the temple management committee approached ASI to take up conservation measures and an estimate was approved for Rs. 34,83,300/- against which Rs. 20.00 lakh was deposited by the committee with Archaeological Survey of India. Some items of works indicated in the approved estimate have been executed and more conservation measures are envisaged according to the revised estimate for Rs. 51,76,000/- approved in July, 2005.

The day to day maintenance of the temple complex, toilets, providing of basic facilities and care of general cleanliness is the responsibility of the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee, which is under the control of Government of Bihar. The toilet facilities available in the temple complex are in a good state of maintenance.

Preservation of historical documents

645. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that historic documents lying in official custodian of the National Archives are not properly preserved,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government are taking for preservation of these documents?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Though the records are kept in air-conditioned stack rooms, old records get brittle due to natural process of ageing.

Preservation and Conservation of Records is a continuous process. National Archives of India takes a series of well-defined steps which includes cleaning, fumigation, deacidification, repairing, lamination and binding for preservation of documents.

Jama Masjid

†646. SHRI SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jama Masjid constructed by the Mughal Emperor is a historical and cultural heritage of Delhi and it is necessary to conserve it but in spite of its being under control of the Wakf Board it has become the property of a particular person;

(b) if so, whether he is also aware of the fact that there is insanitation, crowd and illegal construction around it which is changing the shape of its cultural heritage;

(c) if so, by when it would be declared as protected building; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) It is a fact that Jama Masjid is a historic monument and deserves to be properly conserved. A PIL was filed in the hon'ble High Court of Delhi seeking declaration of Jama Masjid as a centrally protected monument on 12.10.2004.

In compliance with the orders of the Hon'ble High Court dated 3.11.2004, a meeting was held on 14.12.2004 under the Chairmanship of the Director

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Bimba Raikar.